Biographical Literary Criticism:  
Definition:  
Theory stating a work is primarily the product of the author or character’s life.  
Important Questions:  
What insights into the author’s life do we gain from the text?  
How do these insights increase or diminish our understanding of the text?  
What do we know about the author that could influence our interpretation of the text?  
What biographical information about the characters has the author included? Why?  
How does this biographical information increase or diminish our understanding of the text?  
  
**Historical Literary Criticism:**  
Definition:  
Theory stating a work is primarily the product of the author or character’s times.  
Important Questions:  
When was the text written?  
What important historical events happened when the text was written?  
What historical events does the text deal with?  
How does the knowledge of the historical events influence our interpretation of the text?  
How did history affect the language, content, and style of the text?  
  
**New Historicism:**  
Definition:  
Theory emphasizing the individual’s subjective view of politics and history, it became popular in the 1970’s and ‘80’s.  
Important Questions:  
When was the text written?  
What important historical events happened when the text was written?  
How did the author interpret these historical events?  
How did the historical events impact the author? How did this influence the text?